

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN OUT AND AT HOME.

"A Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her."—Prov. xxxi.



DINNER TIME—"ALL READY AND WAITING."

CONFESSIONS OF A FORTUNE TELLER; OR, THE HISTORY OF SALLY COOPER.

Edited by the Author of "Recreation and usefulness."

CHAPTER V.

When Susan's imprisonment expired and she was released from gaol, no Prisoner's Aid Society, nor Women's Refuge, nor Female Reformatory existed to afford her shelter and encouragement. Friendless and without a character, she had no other resource than the workhouse. Here some kind friend would, now and then, strive to lead her thoughts to God's Word and the Saviour. But it would appear that she had not been trained in the right way in her youth; and the hardening influence of her prison experience was so great, that little or no impression could be made upon her. Sinking lower and lower in vice and brutality, she died, when scarcely in the prime of life, a victim to that sinful desire to see into futurity which has its rise in vanity, ill-health, and the love of pleasure.

As Sally grew older she gathered skill, from practice, in fortune-telling, and appears to have enjoyed great fame for her success in one branch of the art in particular. She was much sought after in consequence of the efficacy of her love-charms, which her easily deceived visitors believed to possess the highest virtue. "Trust to me, my dear," she used to say to any weak-minded being who wished to employ her skill. "Just do what I tell you, and leave the rest to me, and I promise you that the man you love shall love you and marry you."

In order to shelter her reputation in case of the occasional failures which she, of course, now and then met with, in spite of all her cunning, deception, and management, she would say, "Depend upon it, if a man can resist the magic of my charms, he is not a man at all, but an evil spirit in the disguise of a man, and it would do you more harm than good to be connected with him, my dear."

"It seems to me wonderful," remarked Mrs. Debreit, in conversation with old Sally, "if people should dare to tamper with the cause of the most powerful of human passions. God is the origin and source of love. Pure and virtuous love springs from Himself, and is a gift bestowed by Him upon His creatures for their well-being and happiness. God is Love, and he that loveth not, we are told, is not of God. It is the duty of everyone to cherish love for all by whom he is surrounded; and his own happiness will be greater or less in proportion as he loves his fellow creatures, and manifests his love by his actions. General love to all mankind must, however, be narrowed down, in practice, to kindly deeds to neighbours and friends; and, to be enjoyed in full perfection, love must be brought within still closer limits. How marvellous the greatness and the minuteness, the generality and the speciality of God's love to us, and the love that He would have us cultivate towards Him and each other. While in His case it *does*, and in ours *ought*, to embrace every human being He has created, yet He condescends to dwell by love in the individual heart of the meanest of His creatures, and has chosen so to form His children that love for a single individual shall be the grand engine of human purity, perfection, progress, and happiness. Love, as the creation of God Himself, is far too pure, and holy, and sacred an object to be touched by unhalloved hands, and to be made the subject of barter, traffic, jest, and vulgar talk and calculation, as we see it now-a-days. Perhaps, nothing more clearly shows how far men and women have sunk below the high estate to which they were at first appointed, than the low, gross notions which everywhere prevail with regard to the Divinity of the mortal emotion—Love. Though not every one goes so far as to consult a gipsy in reference to it, but few treat it with the respectful deference and hallowed awe claimed for it by its mysterious inexplicable nature, its mighty overwhelming effects, and its universal and ever-enduring empire. Though, in itself, the most powerful purifier and cultivator of all the other human emotions, yet its sacred name is employed as the pretext and excuse for all that is gross, base, vilest, and most degraded in connection with humanity. So do men wrest to their own destruction, the very best and noblest gift that God ever bestowed upon His children!"

"Among the many applications that were made to me by love-sick daisies," said Sally, "I very well remember the visit of a young lady to our camp to

beg my aid in a difficulty in which she said she found herself placed. She was a tall, dark, beautiful girl, and her appearance showed that she was in a respectable position of life. I did not know her at all, never having seen her before, so far as I knew; yet she expected me to discover all about her and the business that had brought her to me, by examining the lines of her hand and face. She would scarcely tell me anything, and this rendered the task of deluding her a very difficult one. It was necessary for me to be extremely cautious, and confine myself to general remarks as far as possible during her first visit.

"You have gone through great trouble, my lady," said I. Here a deep sigh encouraged me to proceed. "You are still in sorrow, I can see." "Tears came into her eyes, but she did not speak." "You must give me gold to cross your hand." I see by the lines that yours is an uncommon fate, and that great and important changes are in store for you. Silver will not produce a charm powerful enough to influence your destiny."

"To my great relief," she replied that she had brought no gold with her, but would return another day, at an appointed time, and would then be prepared to satisfy my demands. She did not quit me, however, without paying me handsomely for the time occupied in the first consultation. When she left me, I took care that she should be followed by a boy upon whom I could depend, and having learned from him who she was, and where she lived, I was enabled to possess myself of many facts respecting her, which I turned to good account at our next meeting."

"After a long examination of her hand, on the second occasion, I said, 'A dark shadow has crossed your path, lady, and driven all the sunlight from your life.' You were a handsome gentleman, but you were not happy in your love, because you are not sure that it is returned."

"Oh, that is it!" exclaimed she. "You are quite right. How wonderful that you can discover so much! But now, you must tell me how to win back his love, for I am sure he did love me once."

"I must first ascertain what is the cause of your ill-luck, lady," I continued, gazing at her face attentively. "I see by the lines in your forehead, that it is your fate to be crossed in your dearest plans, by some kind of obstacle, but what it is I cannot yet make out. This obstacle will continually come between you and your wishes, until you have broken through the influence by means of a magic spell."

"What is that to be brought about?" asked the young lady.

"I must consult the oracle of destiny, my dear, and then I will tell you," replied I. "But as I must wait until the stars shine in the heavens, you must come again to-morrow."

"The few words she had said quite confirmed the information I had received, and I was anxious to work with greater confidence in the trustworthiness of my informant."

When she came again and had again had her hand crossed, the gipsy told her she had discovered that the planets were in opposition only for a short time; that they would speedily enter another sign of the zodiac, when they would cease to clash; and she might depend upon the accomplishment of her wishes, if she would but follow out the directions given her. This she promised to do.

"You must bring me his name, my dear," said Sally, "written backwards upon a small slip of paper, a lock of his hair and your own braided together, and a handkerchief, glove, ring, pencil, or something that has been worn or used by him. You must make up into as small a packet as possible, my dear, tied with a true lover's knot, and sealed with sealing wax."

The young girl did as she was bid. Sally took possession of the packet, and told her to go home, prick the fourth finger of her left hand until blood flowed, then write her own name and her lover's name with the blood, and encircle the names with seven rings, also formed with blood, fold up the paper and wear it in her bosom over her heart, for four-and-twenty hours, and then bury it underground, secretly. "Take my word for it, my lady," added Sally, "that your lover will hasten to you as soon as possible. All his love will return a great deal stronger than ever, and he will make you any promise that you like to ask."

Meanwhile, Sally, having learned who the young man was, from the name written backwards, made inquiries about him, and found that he had given up his dark beauty, and was paying attentions to a fair haired girl. This girl she knew slightly. As she was

not so respectably connected, consequently not likely to be so rich and liberal as the other, Sally was true to her client, for her own sake. She sought the gentleman, persuaded him into having his fortune told, said that his good and evil genius were at that moment engaged in fearful strife, but that the good must and would prevail, if he followed her counsels.

"From what I see," said she, pretending to gaze into a magic glass, "you are under the influence of two contending powers. You have the opportunity of winning a handsome dark maiden with hair and eyes like the starless midnight heavens; but something intervenes between her and you. What is that? Ah! a fair childlike form interposes; but that is the work of your evil genius. Your good genius is striving to make the other take her place. There are affinities and congruities between you and the tall dark one, which prove it to be your destiny to unite with her. She alone can make you happy, and bring you riches and honour."

Though the young man laughed and pretended to make light of the gipsy's prophetic powers, yet the result of his interview with her was just what she hoped and anticipated. His former attachment was rekindled, and he abandoned the fair girl, and returned to his allegiance to the dark one, to the present satisfaction of the superstitious maiden, though not for the real and future welfare of either her or himself. Before long, they discovered how completely Sally's arts were human and natural, instead of supernatural and magical, as they had once believed. They were so unsuited to each other that they lived most unhappily together. Wounded by her husband's indifference, the wife often expressed regret that she had ever married him; this was generally followed by reproaches, on his part, for the trick she had played to get him; in short, she was reported to have been as bad as herself, since he also had allowed the gipsy to tell him his fortune.

What a state of things to exist between two persons who had contracted a union spoken of in the Scriptures as typical of the connection between Christ and His Church! How much more wisely would the girl have acted had she made it a matter of fervent prayer to God, that her lover's affection might be restored to her, if it should be for the welfare of both, than in having recourse to a woman as incompetent as herself, and a story-teller and deceiver to boot. Had either, or both, sought the Divine aid in a matter of so much moment, and, in spite of all natural feelings and inclinations, resolutely uttered and acted upon the words—*Thy will be done*; whether married or single they would have enjoyed a peace and satisfaction of which, as it was, they were totally deprived.

Of all the strange infatuations which beset the mind of weak womankind, perhaps the strangest of all is that of thinking that marriage must necessarily bring happiness, and that to lead a single life is weakness and disgraceful. Even before a girl has entered her teens, she must have sufficient opportunities of observing how certainly suffering and anxiety attend matrimony. True, a woman will not escape care by remaining single; but her trials are usually of a totally different kind from those of the wife. While the joys and pleasures of an untroubled life are of a paler and less vivid tinge, the sorrows, the rule, the troubles and afflictions of the unmarried are less painful and severe than those of the married, and it can admit of no doubt that happiness and unhappiness are pretty equally balanced in the two states. How well would it be, then, if all would be content to live single, or to marry according as the leadings of Providence seemed to point out to each the way of duty and wisdom.

ON THE MOUNTAIN BY THE SEA.

O, the bonnie, bonnie lea-ther,
O, the bracing blue-bells, waving free;
O, the bracing sunny weather,
On the mountain by the sea.

Where my Willy's cheeks grow rosy,
And his little voice grows strong,
Where, beside the peat-fire cozy,
He and I sing even-song.

Little Willy loves the mountain,
And the bramble, and the fern;
Loves the ever-rippling fountain,
And the salmon in the burn.

Little Willy sits a-swinning
Wreaths of ivy in the wood;
When he said, with bright eyes shining,
"I love God, He is so good."

SADIE.

SUNDAY THINKINGS, TO BRIGHTEN WORK-DAY TOILS.

Sunday, 6th November, 1864.

"BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,
AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST."—
Matthew xxviii. 19.

It has been thought for some Sundays past about the Family Book, which all God's children love, the Bible; and the Family Speech, prayer; the Family Day, Sunday; and the Family Gathering in the Lord's House. These words tell me of receiving the Family Name; the right to call the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, my Father, my Father, oh, I want to be a child of God in more than name only. I want to have a child's heart of love and trust towards Him through His Son Jesus, to have "the Spirit of adoption" (Rom. viii. 15), to be a child of God, "by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Have I been united to Jesus in baptism by faith—a living branch in the living vine, or am I still dead in trespasses and sins, having no part in Jesus, but in name only, no life from Him flowing into my soul?

How shall I know this? Here is another verse that will answer, "As many as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ." (Gal. iii. 27). "Put on Christ," what does that mean? It is spring time, and every tree is full of new life; each branch puts on the leaves of the tree with which it is joined, of which it is a part; clothes itself with the leaves and arrays itself with the fruit of that tree. The thorn puts not on vine leaves, or the thistle, figs. But the branch that has its union with the vine-root, puts on vine leaves, and hangs with clusters of grapes. Have I put on Christ? (Rom. xiii. 14) Have I the family robe? His righteousness as my covering, His fruits as my clothing and beauty? (Psalm xc. 17; Isaiah xli. 10; Psalm cxlv. 4.) What is His fruit? Read Galatians v. 22, 23, the fruit of His Spirit. How does a tree bring forth fruit? By drinking in the sap that flows from the root to every branch. So "by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, and have been made to drink into one Spirit."

The great question, then for me to think of and answer to-day, is, am I really a child of God, joined to Jesus by faith, and baptised by Him with the Holy Ghost? (Matthew iii. 11.) Or am I only outwardly His in name, through baptism, but not inwardly, not a living branch, having put on the name of the tree, yet not having put on the leaves and fruit of the tree? How awful to have been baptised "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," and not more; to bear His holy name, and not His holiness. (Ezekiel xxxvi. 20—23.)

A Christian, and yet not Christ-like! Lord Jesus, baptise me with Thy Holy Spirit.

Sunday, 13th November, 1864.

"THOU PREPAREST A TABLE BEFORE ME." "THIS IS THE TABLE THAT IS BEFORE THE LORD." "THE CUP OF BLESSING WHICH WE DRINK, IS IT NOT THE COMMUNION OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST?" "THE BREAD WHICH WE BREAK, IS IT NOT THE COMMUNION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST?"—Psalm xxiii. 5; Ezek. xii. 22; 1 Cor. x. 16.

Here is the Family Table. These are the provisions of the Father's House: the blood of Christ, the body of Christ. What is meant by the "communion" of these? Communion means sharing together. When two or more sit together at the same table, and eat of the same food, that is communion.

In the night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed, when Jesus and His disciples sat down to that last Supper, we see God and man sit at the same table and eat and drink together. This was communion. Then it was the Redeemer appointed the Family Meal of the redeemed. Then He prepared a table before them, and said: "He took bread and said, Take, eat, this is my body; and He took the cup saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood." See Matt. xxvi. 26—28. And the redeemed family from that hour have met God their Father at the Lord's Table.

Here God and man eat together and are satisfied. It is the peace offering. Lev. xii. 7. God is satisfied, for "His own blood" has been shed in obedience to the word that had gone forth out of His mouth, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." He who knew no sin was made sin, and poured out His soul unto death that He might justly forgive the sinner. Man is satisfied, for in that shed blood He sees his own penalty borne, and himself made the righteousness of God in Christ. And there is peace, God and man are one. It is the blood of atonement. "Having made peace through the blood of His cross." He hath reconciled us unto Himself. Col. i. 20—22.

The body cannot live without food. So neither can the soul. What is the soul's food? The flesh and blood of the Son of man. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you" (John vi. 51—53). This is the bread of God,

This is the cup of the Lord. Here "we spiritually eat His flesh, and drink His blood; we dwell in Christ and Christ in us; we are one with Christ and Christ with us." It is the feast of the blessed Jesus. He asked me to be remembered for the beauty of His face, His loving deeds, His wondrous miracles, His gracious words, His holy teachings, but for His death. Not only that He died, but that He died for the remission of our sins: "This is my body which is given for you." "This is my blood which is shed for you for the remission of sins." "This do in remembrance of me." Let me never forget it.

How shall I come to this holy table? "With a true heart," simple, tender, penitent, loving, "in full assurance of faith," that Jesus loved me and gave Himself for me." Eating that bread, and drinking that cup, not as a common thing, not as bodily food, but "discerning the Lord's body," partaking of His most blessed body and blood, that so my "sinful body may be made clean by His body, and my soul washed through His most precious blood." Oh, it is the sweetest and most solemn thing on this side heaven, to partake at the table of my God of these "pledges of His love." Blessed Jesus, cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, and prepare me to join this Thanksgiving Feast of Thy redeemed.

Sunday, 20th November, 1864.

"THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH."—Ephesians iii. 15.

What a blessed thought, for God's family often seems such a divided family now. Some have been accepted into the heavenly home, and some are still strangers in a strange land here. The homeland is gone up and the wife left, or the wife has gone home and the husband remains. The child is there, the parent here; or the parent is there, the child here. All are one in Him, and yet so homeless upon earth. Brothers and sisters and friends are divided by the narrow stream of death. But on the Lord's day, in the Lord's house, and most of all, at the Lord's table, the whole family in heaven and earth are one; Jesus is in the midst, and all are with Him and in Him. The white-robed host in heaven, harping with their harps, sing Hallelujah. And the white-robed assembly on earth lift up their voices and join them. But one voice is heard, one enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth: it is the voice of the whole family.

Does my voice reach to these, or is it heard only in the outer assembly? Does my heart cry, "my Father?" Has the wandering, sinning child ever come back to the Father's arms, and received the kiss of forgiveness, and been clothed with the best robe, the shoes, and the ring? Till this is done there can be no real sitting down at the table, no union with the family, no place in the home. See Luke xv.

On earth there are many homes of God, and the Father's children seem divided, and the family scattered. But are they not only like the "many mansions," which yet are one, for they are all "in the Father's house?"

On earth the family are in an enemy's kingdom, ever fighting in the midst of foes. Even their table is spread in the presence of their enemies. Psalm xciii. 5. In heaven they have "gotten the victory," and sit down with the King at His table in His kingdom. On earth they have exceeding sorrow and bitter anguish; in heaven there is no more death nor sorrow, neither shall there be any more pain. Here they weep; there God has wiped away all tears. Here they see His face, how dimly; there they are "made most blessed for ever and exceeding glad with the joy of His countenance." Here the day often turns to darkness; there is no night (here, for the Lord is the Everlasting Light. Here they toil; there they rest. Here they sometimes fall out with one another by the way; there all will dwell in love, for all will dwell in God. The family on earth are as strangers scattered; the family in heaven are gathered in the Father's glory. And yet they are not two families, but one, for that is the Father's prayer, "That they all may be one." And the fighting, and the weeping, and the long night of toil, are "the tutors" under which all are taught "until the time appointed of the Father" (Gal. iv. 2). From hence they shall all possess once in the glories of home, and when the youngest-born is gathered into "our glorious and beautiful home," heaven will descend to earth, and earth will be heaven; for the tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell with them; "their God."

"Love: Rest: and Home: Sweet home!"
Lord, tarry not, but Come."

Advent Sunday, 27th November, 1864.

"WE KNOW THAT THE SON OF GOD IS COME."—1 John v. 20.

"Advent" means coming. For four thousand years a sinning world waited for One coming, who should open the eyes Satan had blinded, break the chains of his prisoners, and redeem the soul itself to the glory of God. Now He has come. "We know that the Son of God is come." He appeared and "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Then He disappeared. The world has not seen Him since, and believers see Him only with the eye of faith. The Spirit of Christ is come,

But He will not always be out of sight. Presently Jesus will come from behind the cloud. He will "appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

How blessed to live now, when the Son of God is come, instead of before His coming. The Son of God has come to me. He has stood at the door of my heart and knocked. I have heard Him often. Have I opened to Him? Has He come in and made it His abode? John xiv. 23. Or is there "no room for Him?" Can I truly say to-day, I know that the Son of God is come? E. A.

IS DINNER READY?

DINNER TIME comes round with a more certain regularity than dinner; and, "shall we get any dinner at all?" is a more important question than, "what shall we have for dinner?" We need not live to eat, but we must eat to live; and a good, wholesome, palatable, plentiful dinner is quite essential to our health and comfort.

The man who does not know what he eats, who is alike indifferent to food, well or ill-cooked, has no reason to be proud of his condition. While it is most true that a fastidious attention to these things is unbecoming, it is also true that a real or assumed disregard of them is absurd. God has given us taste and smell; the wild beast may consume its food raw, the savage may satisfy his appetite in a manner little removed from the wild beast, but it is widely different with a civilized and sensible being.

There are few things more agreeable to a man on leaving his labour at mid-day, and returning tired and hungry to his home, than to find all things ready—a clean cloth neatly spread, the knives and forks scrupulously bright, and the salt and castors conveniently arranged. There is a great deal of comfort in the tidy look of the table that makes amends for a humble meal. Not, mind you, for an ill-cooked meal—for meat burnt to a cinder or scorchingly raw, or for potatoes that are hard as bullets in the middle, and of a yellow ghastliness outside—not for bread that has been cut unevenly with a soiled knife—not for broth that is tasteless except for salt, and dumplings that turn the edge of the sharpest knife—not display of order and nicety will atone for these things. Whose business is it to see to them? Sorely the wife, or the sister, or elder daughter, who stands in the wife's wear place. It is to her that the breadwinner that his daily bread should be decently served; one half of the domestic unhappiness which so many a home, simply arises from a neglect of this important duty.

The man comes in jaded—in come the boys—Tom and Jack from place, and Harry from school—in come the girls from the place where they work; but, mother has been gossiping with a neighbour over the wall she has let the time "slip on," has hurried out late to buy her larder, has cooked the food at a hard gallop, but it is not ready,—the cloth is not laid, and the good man of the house takes up his pipe and smokes and fumes; the boys and girls are ready to follow his example instead of lending a hand to help things on; and mother, hot as on a July day, wants to know what they would all have, in the manner of an aggrieved person, when it must be plain that what they would have is their dinner—if they could get it. When the dinner is served, it turns out to be as bad as bad can be; the boys are clamorous, the girls sulky, the good man of the house lays down, in rather a noisy manner, his knife and fork, and goes off to the "public." Mother scolds, sheeds tears perhaps, until her brood, all but the youngest one, are again at labour,—then she relates her gossip to the neighbour over the wall, who, when her good man comes in to tea, finds her kettle has boiled over and the fire's out.

A VERY DIFFERENT SCENE FROM ALL THIS IS THAT WHICH OUR ARTIST HAS PICTURED. IT IS DINNER TIME; "ALL READY AND WAITING," and father and the boys and girls, quite ready for dinner, find their dinner quite ready for them. Mother's smiling face, though flushed with cooking, gives an extra edge to the appetite, and is quite a grace in itself. She looks so thankful—thankful to see her husband and her children happy—thankful they have food to eat—thankful that she is able to serve—thankful for all mercies in her heart of hearts. Dinner—what is it!—"a dinner of herbs," or "a stalled ox," no matter—she has made the best of it; and she and all about her are ready to add one item to the condiments—an item not usually found in cookery books—CONTENTMENT.

The British Workwoman, OUT AND AT HOME.

"I BELIEVE THAT ANY IMPROVEMENT WHICH COULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE MOTHERS, WOULD EFFECT A GREATER AMOUNT OF GOOD THAN ANYTHING THAT HAS YET BEEN DONE,"—*Earl Shaftesbury.*

BIRTH-DAYS.

THERE are special days in the lives of each of us—anniversaries which we never forget even when years have passed over our heads, and new scenes and circumstances surround us.

"Many happy returns of the day" has always a pleasant, homelike ring. It reminds us of perchance of days bygone, when a new doll or a tea-party of our little friends made us as happy as princes. It reminds us of perchance of a mother's tender kiss, of a father's unusually earnest prayer in the dear old home-days, so separated from us now.

"Many happy returns of the day," spoken by loving lips, is one of the blessings of life. It shows that we are not alone and uncared for,—that, at least, some hearts beat kindly toward us—some friends have true interest in our welfare. And in this selfish world, this is not a trifling good.

Yes, birthdays are among the most pleasant of anniversaries. Another year has passed laden with blessings, in which God's good providence has been so much better than our fears, that we have confidence for the future, and go forth to meet it hopefully and gladly.

This is the anniversary of the birth of The "BRITISH WORKWOMAN." And we are sure our readers will give it a kindly greeting on its birthday morning, and wish it "many happy returns." It has had a year of struggles, necessarily, but it has been a little messenger of good tidings, going from house to house with loving messages; and it has been well received and most kindly welcomed in many of England's Homes. Reverently and gratefully we acknowledge that it has been privileged to do good. It has helped to eradicate evil from some hearts, it has helped to foster good in others. It has spoken a word in season to some young women who were halting between the paths of right and wrong; it has aided the weak, and turned the strength of the strong into a right direction. In a very lowly measure, it is true, but it has been in some degree a silent influence for good. We say this not boasting, but very humbly, because, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto God's name be the glory."

But we are sure that our little PERIODICAL will, on this, its first birthday, appeal to the hearts of the friends it has made, not in vain. Dear Reader, if its advice has been useful, if its words have been encouraging, if, at any time, it has brought to you either pleasure or profit, will you not, on this auspicious day, make it a present of a new subscriber? Aye, even if to do so, you have to put yourself to some little trouble on this November morning.

Your encouragement will be a bond of strength to the "BRITISH WORKWOMAN." It will thrive and grow in favour as it grows older. We trust this will be seen monthly; and therefore, with confidence, we look to Ministers and Teachers, and Masters and Mistresses—to British Workwomen themselves, to stretch out a helping hand, and circulate it widely through the land, with their kindly wishes for "many happy returns of this day." M. F.

DISPENSING FAVOURS.—The best rule, it has been said, for dispensing favours, is "to bestow them on those to whom we may do good, rather than upon those who are able to do good to us," for, "that is not a benefit which is given for gain."

PAUL, THE PERSECUTOR AND THE SAINT.

THE story of the life of the Apostle Paul is that of a devout man—one who, in darkness and in light, was alike zealous in God's cause. We hear of him as the pupil of one of the most sagacious of Jewish teachers, and we might naturally expect to find a God-fearing man. We hear of him as one of the strictest members of the strictest sect—a Pharise—but free from the hypocrisy by which many of the Pharisees were marked. We see him taking an active part in the persecution of the Christians. He stands before us in the horrible scene which closes the life of Stephen. He stands—perhaps unmoved—perhaps jubilant—while that blessed saint and holy martyr, surrounded by a blaspheming and



ST. PAUL'S CONVERSION.—Acts xxi. 6.

murderous throng, kneels and prays, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." God hears prayer. Paul was certainly inclined in this prayer, and, as a brand plucked from the burning, he was chosen of God. No tear—no sigh—no word of mercy from the stern young Hebrew. He is bent on crushing out this new doctrine—obliterating the memory of "One Jesus," and with warrants for the arrest of the Christians, he rides forth with his company, thinking in his very soul that he is doing God service.

Christ met him by the way—not to destroy but to



PAUL AT MELITA.—Acts xxviii. 3.

save—to change by His grace that sword of destruction into a glorious sickle that should gather in the harvest to the garner-house of God. Struck down—blinded by a light above the light of noonday—hearing a voice that speaketh with melody, this man reverts—repents—changes—the heart melted—the conscience convinced—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

But Paul the saint was still like Paul the persecutor—a devout man. His heart was of the true metal—it was fused and cast in another mould, but the same metal still, purified. And now we see him braving every danger, enduring every indignity for the same cause for which the martyr Stephen died—"troubled

on every side yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. What had he to suffer? Fear him recount his story:—"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep: In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, on cold and nakedness." See him in the goal at Philippi—see him in the hands of a multitude bent on his death—see him among the rude islanders, who, on account of a viper fastening on his hand, suppose him first a murderer and then a God! How much more might be added; but this will suffice. We see this man—forsaking all, and forsaken of all for Christ's sake. Read his letters, ponder over his prayers, recall the activities of his life—they all exhibit the same devotion—labouring, whether absent or present, that is, whether by life or by death, to serve the Lord.

What is your life? You are labouring for something—is it for self for money, for pleasure, for ease, for a name and a place among the great ones of the world? These things *perish* all perish in the using. Gain all—you must leave all. What of the things *absent*, the things yet to be revealed, the unseen things which are eternal? Have you any treasure in heaven, when you leave your treasure on earth? Paul had—therefore was he willing to endure all things, to suffer all things—to remain or to depart, to live or to die—"to live was Christ, to die was gain."

Paul is supposed to have suffered martyrdom at Rome in the time of Nero. How joyful to him must have been the summons—a summons which sent him forth from the prison cell, an aged, worn, exhausted, tempted man, to a world of sublime purity, unalloyed happiness, immortal youth. How bright the example he has left! How simple the story of his spiritual existence: "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God."

HINTS INTENDED TO PROMOTE PEACE AND HARMONY IN A FAMILY.*

[Found among the papers of a pious young lady lately deceased, supposed to have been written about the age of twelve years.]

1. We may be quite sure that our *will* is likely to be crossed in the day; so prepare for it.
2. Every person in the house has an evil nature as well as ourselves, and therefore we are not to expect too much.
3. To learn the different tempers of each individual.
4. To look upon each member of the family as one for whom the Lord Jesus died.
5. When any good happens to any one, to rejoice at it.
6. When inclined to give an angry answer, to lift up the heart to prayer.
7. If from sickness, pain, or infirmity, we feel irritable, to keep a very strict watch over ourselves.
8. To observe when others are so suffering, and drop a word of kindness and sympathy suited to them.
9. To watch for *little* opportunities of pleasing, and to put *little* annoyances out of the way.
10. To take a cheerful view of everything, and encourage *hope*.
11. To speak kindly to the servants, and praise them for little things when you can.
12. In all little pleasures which may occur, to put *self* last.
13. To try for the soft answer that turneth away wrath.
14. When we have been pained by an unkind word or deed, to ask ourselves, "Have I not often done the same, and been forgiven?"
15. To be very gentle with the younger ones, and treat them with respect.
16. Never to judge one another, but attribute a good motive where we can.

E. J. K.

* From the Mother's Treasury. Published by "The Book Society."

PAPERS FOR YOUNG WOMEN.

SWEETHEARTS.

It is a fact—an undeniable fact, and a pleasant fact—that all British Workwomen, in all their grades, do get sweethearts. You see I am not going to dress common things in fine words—I use the good old English term, *sweetheart*. The subject needs no fine dressing, it is sufficiently attractive of itself, as all you can bear witness.

Now, let us have a little friendly chat about this said sweetheart—nobody will hear, and all shall be in perfect confidence. Of course you have, or have had, or hope to have, a sweetheart. I suppose there must be some women to whom this pleasure never comes, but I think, I trust, they are few. I do not imagine the bright-eyed lassie now reading this paper to be one of them.

Well, it is quite right you should have a sweetheart, if one has been given you. Do you know what I mean by the expression *given* you. Let me first tell you what it *does not* mean. It does not mean throwing yourself in the way of young men, in order to secure the attention of any one who may first present himself. Neither does it mean, as a good old lady of my acquaintance once informed her daughters—that if you shut yourselves up in a cupboard, you will get a sweetheart if there is one for you. In my private opinion it would be many chances to one if that celebrated individual Mr. Right, happened to guess that Miss Right was stowed away in that particular cupboard.

But what I mean by a sweetheart being *given* you, is this. If you are a well-conducted young woman, there is no doubt but that in God's good providence you will be brought into contact with a fit and suitable person, whose regard you will see it right and agreeable to encourage and reciprocate. So there is no necessity for you to be in any undue haste; no need of pushing yourself forward or thrusting yourself unnecessarily into male society. Some girls, I fear, in their haste to get a sweetheart, are a great deal too eager and thoughtless, and thereby often defeat their own object, and also in time lose that slight diffidence and keen edge of modesty so becoming in women. But do not distress yourself. I repeat: if you possess the common requisites of neatness, cleanliness, good temper, a fair share of intelligence and good manners, and, above all, an irreproachable character, there is no reason why you should not get a sweetheart—and a good sweetheart, too.

Now, a few words as to your behaviour in male society generally. What should characterize it? I answer, simplicity and modesty. You need not be prudish, and, on the other hand, you need not be boyish. I have heard the following advice given to girls just emerging into womanhood, and who felt somewhat strange and awkward in young men's society: "Oh, behave just as you would to your female friends." I think that is scarcely the thing. Some what less of freedom, and more of reserve, to guard against misinterpretation, will, I believe, be instinctively adopted by most modest young women.

There is a hoydenish levity—very distasteful to see—which manifests itself in constant giggling, vulgar noise, and such like displays.

There is a silly affectation in speech and manners—of miming ways, and tossing head, and pretended superiority—that is a long way from true refinement and real worth.

There is, again, an assumption of brusqueness—I might almost say of coarseness—a sort of rudeness, and don't-carinish, which I have seen young women affect, possibly to make themselves appear free and independent, possibly to seem affable and familiar—certainly to make themselves look ridiculous!

You will at once see that neither of these attitudes is commendable. You need not ask what is wrong about them all. You will at once perceive they are all lacking *womanliness*—that delicacy of feeling and refinement of demeanour which we instinctively associate with a true woman, in every station of life.

I know there are girls who fall into one or other of the errors I have just described, through sheer thoughtlessness, or simply from adopting the tone of their companions, without ever giving the propriety or impropriety of their behaviour a single serious consideration. They "mean no harm." Very likely! And they may get wiser [by and by, or the habits and style they now adopt may cling to them for life, overspreading much that is good beneath, and giving others quite a wrong impression of their character. But the worst phase of all is when the habits acquired intrinsically affect the character, turning the modest girl into the bold woman; the sincere into the hypocritical.

I think I have said enough to guard you against these faults. In a few words, be simple and natural, be gentle and womanly, and do not pretend to be what you are not.

These are general remarks on deportment; let us come to more particular. I hope I may assume you possess too much good sense ever to merit the unenviable appellation of *flirt*. I have seen those who seemed to enjoy the charge as if it were a mark of honorable distinction; but they were chiefly silly, giddy girls, who scarcely knew what they were doing, only that they were bringing themselves into notice—or what was to their credit or

and all its evil consequences. If she can do this without unkindness and without ostentation, she will have performed a nobler part than the women who can count a dozen offers. The man she could not love will not cease to respect her. Flirting is a dangerous word, lasses! Have a care. Between two stools we often, &c., &c. You don't want half-a-dozen husbands (you will find one quite enough), so don't be wanting or getting half-a-dozen sweethearts. G. U.

"LOOK UP."

A LITTLE FLOWER-FABLE.

"I WISH I could be of some use," said a newly-opened daisy that grew in a pleasant field; "but I am so small, I wonder why I was made." And the little flower looked timidly around; and, as a soft wind played over the field, waving the long grass, it kissed the little daisy, and said, "God has made nothing in vain: 'look up' only!"

As the trembling flower raised its head, a bright sunbeam glanced by, and dried the tear-drop that dimmed its eye; the daisy felt grateful, and looked up with a smile. Just then a maiden was passing, and she sank down wearily on the grass, close by the daisy, and wept: for sorrow had darkened her home, and her spirit was cast down. Presently she raised her head, and caught sight of the daisy at her feet; and as she gazed on its simple beauty, she thought of some words learned in childhood, that ran thus, "If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall He not

much more clothe you, O, ye of little faith?" "Oh, yes," thought Ida; "I shall not be forsaken. I, too, will look up, even as the daisy." So, with a bright smile, she gathered the tiny flower, and as she pursued her way, she sang—

"Alike in sunshine, or in shower,
I still will trust to Thee;
Since Thou, when carest for
a flower,
Wilt much more care
for me."

How happy the daisy felt then! And as the soft breezes kissed its white brow, it whispered, "You were right, kind friends: nothing is made in vain," and it blushed crimson. Though it dropped in Ida's hand, yet, as soon as she reached her home, and placed it in cool water, it looked up again with a cheerful smile. Very precious to Ida was her simple flower, for it seemed like a whisper of faith and hope, and her fearful spirit began to look up more than was her wont. And even when the fair rosy tinged had left its cheeks, and its bright golden eye grew dim, the daisy felt glad, and whispering, "Ever look up," it died.

Then the hand that gathered it laid it carefully away amidst her treasures; and often when Ida feels sad, the sight of the withered flower brings hope and comfort, for she remembers the day when she found it in the pleasant field, and how it bade her "look up," amid her sorrow, from earth to heaven.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.—We are told of Queen Elizabeth, that, except when engaged by public or domestic affairs, and the exercises necessary for the preservation of her health and spirits, she was always employed in either reading or writing; in translating from other authors, or in compositions of her own; and that, notwithstanding she spent much of her time in reading the best writings of her own and former ages, yet she by no means neglected that best of books, the Bible; for proof of which take her own words: "I walk," says she, "many times in the pleasant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I pluck the goodly herbs of sentences by pruning; eat them by reading; digest them by musing; and lay them up at length in the high seat of memory by gathering them together, that so, having tasted their sweetness, I may the less perceive the bitterness of life."

"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste."

The Teachings of the Hills.

THE Teachings given by the Hills
Are not all great and grand,
But simple as the small brown hills
Which stream through rocky land.

The humblest thoughts the hyssops keep
For Him who all things holds;
Nor least in vain the mountain sheep
Snowed in their stony folds.

And modest thoughts rise high in air,
And nearer to the sky,
As purple pansies climb the stair
Of mountain ridges high.

The grandest truths that highest rise,
There simply meet the sight;
Even the black mountain butterflies
Have winglets tipped with white.

Firm foot—clear eye—together brought,

An aim to further reach;

The simplest life, with noblest thought—

These do the mountains teach.

In all things high, and all things low,
"Thy simple truth we need;

The small hills down the mountains flow,
And largest rivers feed.

The mountain bee, the mountain thyme,
Show to all open eyes,
How lofty modest worth may climb,
How high small wings arise!

The Teachings given by the Hills,—

The preaching of the fells,
Flow pure and simple as their rills,
In blessing on the dells.

And who would to the mountains go,
Must bring back to the glen
High thoughts of love for all below!
True reverence for men!

G. B.

discredit. Flirts are toys with which men—some who call themselves men—use themselves when they can find nothing better to do. He is daring who thinks of anything more serious than play with your real self. Do we not constantly see the flirts left in hand, when the sober, modest girls, with not half the external attractions perhaps, are comfortably settled in life? Do they not frequently become the old maids, or get the proverbial crooked stick?

Some one has rightly said—a woman's fame is so delicate a thing that it will not bear handling. And who would care to have her name lightly passed from lip to lip; or what sensible girl does not value herself more highly than to be at every professing admirer's beck and call. Don't flirt!

As to those who trifle with the feelings of others, who encourage an affection they never mean to return; intend to accept, just to gratify a selfish and wicked passion for admiration and conquest—why, the less said about such the better. British Workwomen who have ever suffered keenly themselves, are not likely to inflict wanton suffering upon others. It is cowardly and cruel so to do. It is kindest, when it can be done, to check a fruitless affection in the bud. It is true you may unconsciously help to foster and mature the plant till it is full blown, but a sensitive woman can generally feel how she is regarded by others; her instinct often warns her of the truth from ordinary regard to a deeper feeling, and her natural tact will often enable her to prevent a hopeless suit,

ESTHER LEE'S HOLIDAY.

A TALE OF THE 28th OF JUNE.

CHAPTER I.

A HOLIDAY!—How little can those who are free to make holiday any day comprehend the full significance of that word! How little can they tell what it is to feel for once that labour is not the worker's unvarying doom—that it may be laid aside awhile, without self-reproach for a neglected duty haunting their hours of enjoyment, and poisoning all their pleasures! And none can so fully surrender themselves to the enjoyments of a long day of amusement and gladness as those to whom it is a rarely granted boon; none can so truly taste the sweetness of the honeycomb as they who but seldom raise it to their lips.

From ancient custom, it is a rule with the good people of Warminster to indulge themselves with a holiday on the 28th of June, by general consent decreeing universal closing of shops and cessation of business. And what a multitude of both sexes it sets free from the dull routine of daily toil—both employers and employed alike glad to relax, but for a short time, the cares of the world their hold upon the spirit. Every year, as the day comes round, what crowds of smartly-dressed folk throng the streets—what clattering there is of horses' feet, and whirling by of vehicles of every description. And how anxiously is that day looked forward to by thousands in the place. How many prayers for fair weather are breathed in a spirit which might provoke our smile, but not our censure; as, frivolous though it seems, that petition but asks the simple gratification of those powers of pure and innocent enjoyment which our beneficent Creator has bestowed upon His creatures.

A fairer morning seldom brightened the heavens than when the inhabitants of Warminster to their Annual Holiday three or four years since; and of all who gladly hailed the sunshine, none welcomed it more gaily than Esther Lee, the tenant of a little room, three pair of stairs up, in one of the most obscure streets of the town. A happy and a light-hearted maiden was Esther Lee; though every day was wont to bring to her its round of active duties, and she was not a moment of her waking hours but found full employment. But it is in the performance of our duties that happiness is most surely to be found; and though dwelling there alone, Esther was cheered by the knowledge that there were those elsewhere who loved and blessed her for her industry and affection, and whose prayers were offered up for her exemption from the evils they could not guard her from in person. And thus alone she could not cloud her spirit, for if a shade was cast by the thought that the pleasant home of her childhood was too distant for her to often visit, it was quickly chased away by the remembrance that, if she had not left it, she should have been a burden instead of an assistance to the father, mother, and sisters whose love was with her wherever she went. As it was, Esther Lee had chosen comparatively to spare beyond her own necessities, for she was a quick and clever dress-maker; which qualities secured her abundant employment. True, if she went out to work, her daily remuneration was but a shilling; yet on such days she was at no expense; and if employed at home she earned much more, while even when engaged out there were always some hours in the morning and evening to be occupied by work taken in. So, cheerfully and gratefully Esther Lee worked on, happy in her feelings of independence and self-appropriation, and in the enviable consciousness of adding to the comforts of those beloved ones at home.

But this morning there was no thought of work in Esther's mind, which was as full of anticipated pleasures as was natural to her years. None knew the preparations which, with a particular giddy vanity, she had been making for the Holiday. Her bonnet had been fresh-trimmed, a pretty muslin dress made up to look worth thrice the money it had cost, and her last year's mantle altered to the present fashion. Not one of all these fresh acquisitions had yet been worn, yet Esther knew that all were exceedingly becoming; was it then any wonder that she hailed so joyfully the bright sun-rays which shone through her window? or that a song lyric as she mounted by of the back, broke from her lips, as she bided about her little room to set everything in its usual order of the day? Then, one by one, bonnet, dress, mantle, the new silk handkerchief, and delicate kid gloves, were drawn forth ready for wear; and as

the clock near door struck eight Esther put on her every-day bonnet and shawl to hurry off to the shoemaker's in the neighbouring street, to see if her shoe was mended.

But at the door she paused a minute to look back at all her finery, rendered the more precious by the remembrance of how it had been purchased by saving up every farthing which, in her conscientious division of time earnings, she considered as her own; for the generous girl never afforded herself any indulgence by deducting aught from what she was in the custom of committing to her family. And a blush crossed her cheek as she thought of how well she should look in her gala attire; and shall we betray poor Esther's only and carefully hidden secret? at the thought that one whom her young heart loved better, even than it knew, would see her in it; for within two hours she was going in a large pleasure van to join a party who proposed making merry during this long summer holiday amid the ruins of an old Abbey, some fifteen miles away; and Harry Thornhill was to be of the number.

How her heart beat as she ran lightly down stairs! It was well for her peace of mind that she knew not how much of real affection throbbled in his hurried pulse; for Thornhill was no moved lover of hers, nor had she received from him those attentions which should lead her to expect it. And bitterly Esther would have wept had she been conscious of the truth—that her love was given fully, though unsought—and that Thornhill regarded her as a pretty, graceful automaton, a sweet, gentle, mindless girl, whose heart was not worth winning; for the poor girl's natural dignity and reserve were, in his presence, aggravated into extreme embarrassment, by the value which she had unfortunately allowed herself to place on his opinion, and deprived her of all power of appearing her own intelligent and high-souled self, as she might have done, had no such feeling paralysed her. As it was, Thornhill remained ignorant of those treasures of mind and heart which were well worth his love; and though he had been struck by her beauty, his interest had not deepened further than the admiration it had first excited. But Esther guessed not the cloud which hung between her and Thornhill's love, and in her many hours of loneliness had so permitted her thoughts to dwell on every kind word and look, that what had at first been merely a feeling of gratification at being the chosen partner of one whose attention all her young friends were anxious to attract, had grown into a deeply-rooted attachment, which it would cost her years, perhaps, of suffering and sorrow to tear out from her heart.

This was wherefore that heart was set so fully on this day's long dreamed-of pleasure. During the few minutes' walk to the shoemaker's, Esther's fancy found time to run anew through the long list of bright anticipations; yet her last thought, as she gained the door, was the wonder, whether Harry Thornhill would dance first with herself or Betsy Henderson, a bold, giddy flirt, who had a trick of making any man she chose dance with her; though, as is usual with such girls, no one, however he might talk and jest with her, ever dreamed of being her partner in the long and intricate dance of life.

"Yes, Miss, it's all ready for you," said the shoemaker, or cobbler perhaps we should more justly style him, as, putting down the boot on which he was employed, he singled out the smallest of the half dozen shoes which lay beside him. "There it is, Miss—A little bit on the heel, and two or three stitches at the toe—thereence."

As Esther paid the threepence, she looked at the number of still unended boots and shoes which covered the benches. "You are not going to work all day, are you?" she inquired.

"Aint I?—I hope I am," replied honest James Rawson, who was already drawing the wax thread through the coarse leather, "else my old woman and the young ones are like to go superfluous to bed."

Esther glanced round the humble room, beside whose little window a woman sat making shoes for the poor of the parish. At her feet an infant lay sleeping in a cradle, and several children were playing about with toys, snailing faces.

The cobbler looked up, and fixing his eyes on those of Esther—"There are eight or ten on 'em in all," he remarked; "God bless their little hearts!—But I've found out, somehow, that if we don't work, we can't eat,—you know, Miss, that the manna only fell for those who were good-hearted and busy." "Aunt!" said a child of rest out of seven. "Now, what?" added Rawson, with a good-humoured smile, as he observed her altered countenance. "To them that can afford to take a holiday, it is very natural and pleasant for them to do so."

Esther felt her spirits damped as she left the house.

In her experience, she had regarded this happy day as an universal enfranchisement from everything resembling labour; and unrejoicing and cheerful though they were, it clouded her joy to meet any one who did not share her happiness. But the noise and bustle of the street soon banished such reflections; for, early as it was, crowds of people were already astir, and Esther's heart grew lighter among the throng who, like herself, were bent wholly on the enjoyment of the holiday. Now she received a gay nod from a young friend, as an omnibus dashed by—Mary Foot's well-to-do aunt had made this the first week of a week of holidays which Mary was to spend with her in London. But Esther was too happy to envy any one—not for a twelvemonth of London gaieties would she have resigned that day at the roined Abbey.

And now, within a few yards of home, a little girl was jostled against her.

"Please, ma'am, to buy a pincushion?" said the child, raising a white cloth from a basket containing toilet-cushions and knitted socks.

"I don't want any, my dear," said Esther, gently.

"Oh, pray do buy, ma'am!" persisted the child, hursting into tears.

Something in the tone made Esther stoop down to look at her more nearly—"Dear me! it is that you, Susan Morley?" she asked, gazing doubtfully on the little pale thin face.

"Yes, ma'am,—yes, Miss Lee," replied the child, who at length remembered her.

"And what are you crying for, my dear?"

"Because—because," said Susan, wiping her eyes with her pinafore, "the baby is sick, and Loty is hungry; and mother sent me to try and sell the socks and pincushions. But mother says it's no use to-day, for people will all be out pleasuring, and have no time to buy." And as she said this, poor Susan began to cry more bitterly than before.

Esther was moved at the sight of her distress, and yet more at the thought of the suffering it betokened.

"Where does your mother live now?" she inquired, "it is a long time since I have seen her."

"In Clarence Street," was the reply; "but nobody comes to see her now."

"That shall not be the case much longer," thought Esther to herself; and taking the little girl by the hand, she returned to the room where her festive attire still lay tempting her to don it. But that must be delayed for a time; so, for a few scanty drops of groceries into a pail, and apprising the old woman who alone was to keep house that day, that she was called away unexpectedly, Esther set out for Clarence Street with Susan Morley. Fortunately, neither baker's nor butcher's shops were yet closed, and Esther made small purchases at both, though at the sacrifice of more than half the money she had reserved for the possible expenses of the day. But the painful words "Loty is hungry," haunted her, and revealed a degree of misery she would do all in her power to alleviate.

On reaching Mrs. Morley's room, Esther paused, while her little companion ran in—"Mother! mother! here's good Miss Lee!" cried the delighted child.

"Win?" inquired a low sad voice. "What? have you sold the things?" asked Mrs. Morley, as Susan overjoyed placed a loaf in her hands.

"No, no, mother, I sold nothing! Miss Lee gave me all!" said Susan, eagerly.

"Miss Lee," repeated the mother. "What, Esther Lee?" she continued, as the latter came forward. "How surprised, how ashamed I am!" And a deep painful blush crimsoned her wasted cheek.

"Asked? no, no, I wish she would say 'I'?" said Esther, clasping her hands in the warmest friendship. "Are we to be good to one another? Think only of those dear ones around you," added the amiable girl, bending down to kiss a child who hugg back in terrified silence at the sight of a stranger, yet kept her large eyes fixed with distressing earnestness on the food her sister had brought in. Another moment, and she was drawing the bread given to her with an eagerness which Esther could not bear to witness.

"And poor baby?" she said, turning to Mrs. Morley.

"He is very, very ill," said the mother, mournfully. "I greatly fear that I shall lose him."

And Esther's heart echoed that fear as she stood beside the humble couch, where a child of two years old lay tossing restlessly, his cheeks burning and lips parched with violent fever.

"Don't you think a little lemonade might allay his thirst, better?" she inquired, as Mrs. Morley put a cup of water to the little sufferer's lips.

"It might," said Mrs. Morley, "but—"

She could say no more, but Esther knew the rest.

"I will get a little for him, if you will take some

breakfast," she said kindly. "Surely Susan can get a little boiling water from some one in the house, and then we will have it ready in a minute." And in a minute the tea was made, and in a few more Esther was out and back, and busily compounding the lemonade, while pressing the sorrowing mother to take the breakfast, which, weary and exhausted though she was, conflicting emotions of gratitude and anxiety almost forbade her touching.

Gloomy was the tale to which Esther hearkened. When last they had met—a year before—Mrs. Morley had been some months a widow; since then, misfortunes, one after another, had befallen her; she had changed her abode, and Esther had lost sight of her; and as distress thickened round her, friends dwindled, making her shiver from claiming the friendship of any, until at last she had sunk to the state of poverty in which she was now discovered.

But the severest trial of all was to see her youngest born stricken, it seemed by the hand of death, and languishing under sufferings she had no power to alleviate by any of those little luxuries which become needful in the hour of sickness. A benevolent doctor, whose practice was too extensive to allow of his visiting much time in the country, visited her child; but Mrs. Morley's lingering pride forbade her thrusting her real circumstances upon his notice, or, like others of his profession, he might have taken care that his little patient possessed every comfort. Having been called out early in that direction, the doctor's carriage stopped at the door by nine o'clock. Esther read in his grave manner that the case was indeed very serious; the mother dared ask no questions; but the nurse followed him out of the room, and inquired "if there was any hope?"

"But little," was the reply. "He may live, but the chances are against him. Before twelve hours are past, however, I think it will be decided."

A child came over Esther at these words—she had not thought of death being so near. As she stood motionless, looking after the doctor's carriage, and trying to recover herself before her return to the mother's presence, Betty Henderson passed in a beautiful new shawl and pink silk bonnet. How exceedingly pretty she looked! Esther had half forgotten the Abbey and its expected visitors, but all came back to her with that sight. It was nearly time that she, too, should be dressed and ready to start for the majestic old ruins, to meet the gay party of merry-makers, and, above all, Harry Thornhill.

But could she desert the sorrowing and widowed mother in her hour of trial and distress? Could she, knowing what was to be looked for, leave Mrs. Morley friendless and alone to meet the fearful crisis which was at hand? The reply came quickly from her heart—she could not. She could enjoy no happiness, haunted, as she would be, by the thought of her friend's solitary wail beside her dying child, and every pleasure would be destroyed by the thought that she had neglected a sacred duty to obtain it. For to comfort and aid the sick, the sorrowing, and the helpless, is one of those great duties which He who came on earth to reclaim and save us, has taught by example as well as by precept.

Besides, the greater part of the money she had so carefully boarded up for the holiday was spent, and the remainder might be ere long required by Mrs. Morley's necessities. She would for her sake it had been much more, but no temptation could have induced Esther to expend one penny of it selfishly. No, she could not go to the Abbey. The long dreamed-of holiday must be to her only a dream; let who might laugh and sing, and dance, she would remain with those to whom her presence seemed an especial blessing sent from heaven.

Not that the sacrifice of her long-cherished hopes was either a light or a painless one. There were so few opportunities of meeting Harry Thornhill; and it was only the other day she had been told that he said that Betsy Henderson was very handsome. And uncommonly handsome she was that morning certainly, in all her gay dress. Never before had Esther thought her brilliant eyes and sunny smile so fascinating—perhaps Harry would think so, too. Such thoughts came often to her mind, causing a pang such as she had never felt till then. Yet there she lingered still in the abode of poverty and sickness, comforting, tending, and suggesting everything she could think of to afford ease to the suffering child, whose complaining murmurs became each hour more heart-rending and incessant. But never once did her purpose waver, or a regret outbreak for the course which she had chosen. During that day the true nature and extent of Esther's feelings were for the first time revealed to her, and she beheld how rashly she had perilled her happiness by allowing so deep

an attachment to grow up in her heart for one who, though he had seemed to admire her, had never, by spoken word or general demeanour, given her cause to regard him as a wooer—it was left for after days to teach her how very far he was from entertaining such a thought.

Hour after hour passed by, and to Esther it appeared that the child was growing worse, and, though she still spoke at times of hope, she could not strive to lure the mother into a belief that all was certain to go well. At length evening began to close in, sultry and suffocating. The door and window were opened wide, but not a breath of air seemed moving, and the atmosphere felt close and oppressive as though a thunder storm was at hand. A shudder passed over Esther as she watched the sunlight retreating to the roofs of the neighbouring houses, warning her how rapidly the crisis-hour drew nigh. And now the tread of horses and rattling of wheels, which had for a long time been waiting, told at once that the crowds of pleasure-seekers were beginning to return, and that for the poor horses there had been no holiday that day. But Esther noted sadly that the child appeared unconscious of the sounds which had greatly annoyed him in the morning.

Day had yielded to the summer twilight, and still the mother sat weeping by her child, who now heeded not her voice or loving words as she addressed him. Then—as often before—Esther began to speak to her of the mercy and goodness of God; how He oftentimes takes pity on our sorrow, and can help us in our hour of greatest need; and how, if it so pleased Him, He could still raise up that weak and helpless one, and make him happy and blessing to her future years. And then, feeling the responsibility cast upon her by the doctor's information, she dared not endeavour to revive too fully the lamp of hope which had almost died out in the mother's heart, but she went on to remind her sorrowing companion how little competent we are to judge what may be best for us; and the widow's tears were almost stayed while listening to Esther's simple yet eloquent and consoling words, as the usually silent and timid girl told so truly of the high and unerring wisdom which, often against our will, guides us past dangers, and guards us from sorrows—which in our blindness we cannot see—and how, if it should be the Almighty will to remove that beloved child from earth, it might be in the tenderest mercy that he was taken. For who could tell what wrongs or hardships, what trials or temptations might await him if he lived? Who could tell from what pain or misery that early death might save him? Who could tell if he might not even have turned from the path to that heaven which would now open its portals to receive him?

"God's will he do!" said Mrs. Morley, bowing her head; "may He grant me resignation, whatever happens." But the anguish of her grief was past, and she felt a calmness to which she had been for days a stranger.

Unnoticed by either of the anxious watchers, two young men had entered the house a short time before, and while one of them ran up to its best apartment, the other remained below in the passage. It was while Esther—unsuspecting other auditors—poored forth her high and consoling arguments to the despairing mother's ear. In a few minutes the dweller in the house hurried down the stairs.

"I have changed my mind," said his friend. "I am not going to the play to-night."

"Nonsense! you don't mean it. You'll change your mind again in a minute."

"No, I shall not," was the quiet reply. "I am fully determined not to go."

"Well, I can't stop to argue the point with you. But I'm off, however, and I dare say you'll soon be after me." So saying, the speaker darted away in all the added splendour of an evening waistcoat and freshly-brushed coat.

But his friend evinced no inclination to follow him, or indeed to leave the house, though he was not among its usual inmates. He stood leaning against the wall, feeling himself guilty of no treachery in listening to the low sweet tones which, amid the general stillness in the dwelling, came clearly to his ear from that inconvenient little back room—for any one who paused in passing might have heard them as he did. With what surprise and deep interest he hearkened to the evidence of heart, and soul, and feeling, and high intelligence, which breathed in every sentence. Could it be Esther Lee that spoke? or was it some other to whom belonged a voice as soft and musical?

After Mrs. Morley's words of resignation, there was silence for a little while. Then Esther said very softly,

"He is sleeping."
"He is dead!" uttered the mother in a suppressed tone, whose painful expression thrilled to the listener's heart.

"No—no—he sleeps!" said Esther. "God grant it may restore him to you."

A murmured prayer from Mrs. Morley followed, and all again was silent. But in a few minutes a carriage stopped, and the loiterer near the street door stood aside to let the doctor pass.

"Much better in every way," was the doctor's remark. "Mrs. Morley, a very dangerous crisis appears to be past, and I have far better hope of your child than I have had for several days. 'My good girl,' he added kindly to Esther, 'you may safely go home to-night; I think Mrs. Morley will be quite able to take care of her little patient.'"

How delighted was Esther to hear that the extreme danger was considered over. Soon after the doctor's departure she prepared to return home; and as she bade farewell to Mrs. Morley, there was a little whispered contention; and though the young man strove to turn a deaf ear to it, he could not help guessing what it was about, and how it ended in the residue of the generous girl's little treasure passing into the widow's hands. As gravely, though cheerfully, Esther approached the front door, a well-known voice said,

"Will you allow me to see you home, Miss Lee?"

Esther started. She could scarcely summon power to accept audibly the proffered escort; but Harry Thornhill considered the recent cause sufficient for her emotion. They walked on some yards without speaking, then Thornhill said—

"I was very much surprised at not meeting you at the Abbey, especially as I was told you had spoken with great certainty of going. But now I find that you have been far better employed than any of us."

A flash of light from a confectioner's window showed distinctly the blush which these words called to Esther's cheek. Never had Thornhill thought she looked so beautiful, though she assuredly was much more plainly dressed than any girl he had spoken to that day.

"I dare say you were all very happy," observed Esther, after a little while.

"Yes, very—or at least very merry. But happiness is more generally to be found in doing good than in amusing oneself. Do you not think so?"

"When I awoke this morning," said Esther, timidly, "I felt as if I could be very happy at the Abbey; but when I met Susan Morley, and saw her mother, it took away all wish to go. And now I feel much happier than I could have done if I had been there."

"I am very sure you do," replied Thornhill, earnestly. "I heard some pity you for not being with us; but, had they known all, they might have envied you."

And now—far too soon—Esther was at her home. "Do you ever go out for a walk on Sunday afternoons?" asked her companion.

"Yes, frequently, when the weather is fine, for I have seldom time on other days."

"Now have I," said Thornhill, who was a highly esteemed assistant in a large drapery business. Will you let me call for you next Sunday?"

To this Esther readily agreed, and reached her home in a flutter of agitation little suspected by its cause. There lay all her holiday finery still unworn. No matter—she did not now care about Thornhill's seeing her in it. And it was just as well she should not. For on Sunday Harry called, and they had a long delightful walk together; but though the new dress, and the bonnet, the mantle, the gloves, and the hankerchief all were on, he never once observed one of them. He saw only the fair sweet face, in which he could now read both intellect and feeling, and thought only of the noble and generous heart which beat within that graceful form.

On their return they called at Mrs. Morley's; and it was a pleasure to meet her smile of welcome, and behold the cheerful faces of Susan and Lotty. The child, though pale and weak, was recovering daily; and the mother told them, with a gratitude that weighed down the barriers of reserve and sensitiveness, that some kind friend, she guessed not whom, had prevented for a time all chance of her feeling the sting of poverty so bitterly as she had done. Esther felt in no doubt whether that generous assistance had proceeded.

We know not how it was, but Esther and Thornhill did not find near so short a way to her home as on the evening of the holiday. Perhaps they missed the road. However it was, the long twilight was growing

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